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ARMY	REP	AF	A-93		SECRET		B-1 EP	
ARA	EUR	FE	NO.		SECRET		HANDLING INDICATOR	
NEA	CU	INR	TO		Department of State			
E	MP	IO	DEPT PASS:		Managua, Mexico, San José, San Salvador, Tegucigalpa, USCINCSO			
L	FBO	AID	EO 11652:		XGDS-4			
AGR	COM	FHH	TAGS:		GT, PINS, SHUM, PORS			
INT	LAR	TAN	FROM		Ambassador GUATEMALA		DATE: August 29, 1977	
TR	XMB	AIR	SUBJECT		Monthly Report on Political Violence and Human Rights: July 1977			
ARMY	CIA	NAVY	REF					
OSD	USA	NSA						
SUMMARY: With only 19 press-reported incidents, including 14 deaths, probably attributable to political motives, July was a relatively uneventful month statistically. The EGP remained fairly quiet. Nevertheless, several incidents, including one in which the authorities reportedly had a hand, created the impression that political violence had reached levels unusual even for Guatemala, as measured against the recent past. President Laugerud publicly acknowledged, for the first time in local memory, that "police elements" could be involved in illegal violence. Human rights received substantial attention in the President's annual address to Congress, mostly critical of U.S. "interference." But Guatemalan political rhetoric concerns itself increasingly with human rights themes. END SUMMARY Student abduction-killings. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Guatemala 4979 reported the abduction-torture-killing of 2 students, Anibal Leonel CABALLEROS and Robin GARCIA Davila, in late July [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The deaths stimulated denunciations of the Government by labor, universities and student organizations, either for outright complicity or for condoning such actions by right wing "paramilitary" groups. President Laugerud artfully diffused an ugly situation by showing with word and deed that the Government would not interfere Enclosure: Excerpt								
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with peaceful demonstrations, by meeting with the parents of the dead youths and university figures, and by vowing to get to the bottom of the case. He made the rare admission to the press that (1) armed groups on the right exist, and (2) he could not discount the possibility of involvement by "police elements" in the Caballeros-García killings. Such "had occurred before and could again," he was reported to have said. As of late August, however, the Government had revealed nothing further about the case, which has become a new rallying cry for the Guatemalan left.

ESA -- fact, phantom or facade The Caballeros-García episode served to raise further questions about the recently-announced ESA (the Anti-Communist Secret Army)-- see June report, A-88. The García body was found with a tag attributing the killing to such a group. Did the perpetrators conveniently seek to shift blame to the ESA, whether or not such an organization really exists?

In the course of the month "ESA" figured in two other reported incidents: the director of a normal school in Quezaltenango received a threat signed "ESA"; and an ESA note reportedly accompanied the bullet-riddled body of an unidentified man found in Guatemala City.

Jesuits targeted? In an incident which brought to many minds the ultimatum against Jesuits in El Salvador, Father Fernando HOYOS, a Jesuit priest, was picked up on a street in Santa Cruz del Quiché by men who identified themselves as judicial police. The latter tried to handcuff him when he asked for identification. Father Hoyos was able to extricate himself and found refuge in a Pentecostal church, whereupon his pursuers left the scene, supposedly in a car with non-Guatemalan license plates. Church groups publicly protested the incident, which was witnessed by a number of townspeople.

We have not been able to develop further information about

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this episode. No other incidents involving Jesuits in Guatemala have since come to light.

Reprisal against glass firm management To all appearances the first leftist-sponsored assassination in two months was the attack on Lic. Jorge Roberto GARCIA Gómez, the industrial relations manager of CAVISA, a local glass manufacturer. The attack left Garcia's bodyguard dead. Garcia survived, but lost an eye in the shooting which occurred in heavy Guatemala City traffic. Garcia figured prominently in a major labor dispute more than a year ago. No group has come forward to take responsibility.

[REDACTED]

The seemingly gratuitous attack on Gómez caused more than usual bitterness in the business community.

EGP keeps its hand in The Luis Turcios Lima Brigade of the Guerrilla Army of the Poor took credit for the burning of buildings at the finca Santa Ana in La Gomera, Escuintla Department, as well as radio transmitters, a car and a dump truck. Delay in paying farm workers of the area supposedly prompted the EGP action. Further west on the Pacific slope, in Retalhuleu Department, unknown persons sabotaged power lines. In the absence of accompanying propaganda, EGP involvement appeared unlikely.

Communist Party makes noise The PGT set off a number of bombs in various parts of the country, but no injuries and little property damage accompanied. The explosions were designed to call attention to party literature left at the scene.

Raising the level of human rights consciousness President Laugerud's July 1 report to the Congress on the state of the nation dealt extensively with human rights. The oral portion contained an indictment, remarkable for a conservative President, of Guatemalan land-owning groups:

When the industrious and calloused hands of the campesinos produce in order to make themselves

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independent -- without seizing property, without engaging in destructive acts, without affecting existing wealth -- the large land holder who wants to keep labor cheap and submissive, rises to harass and repress.

Linking "revolutionary violence" to social and economic injustice, he went on to say, "the legal institutions which govern us will rest on a broader base to the extent property and current wealth are respected, once new wealth is distributed fairly." Without ignoring the "international forces" behind left-wing violence, he said such violence is nourished by "poverty, injustice and marginalization." He reserved his strongest and most direct criticism for the nation's coffee growers, for not sharing more of their recent windfall profits with their laborers. The impact of all this, nevertheless, was dampened by the President's caveat to the effect that in a free enterprise system like Guatemala's, the Government cannot dictate standards of behavior to the economic establishment.

The foreign relations segment of the printed report to Congress devotes a separate section to human rights (see enclosure). Although rejecting the "false accusations by entities like Amnesty International" and asserting the Government's respect for human rights, it criticizes the United States Government for having "arrogated to itself" the right to judge other nations' human rights performance and for conditioning "even military and economic aid" to that opinion. The result was "unwarranted interference" in internal affairs.

The month was noteworthy also for the publication, without comment, in the opposition newspaper El Gráfico of a resume of Amnesty International's report on violence in Guatemala since 1966. The review covered a full page. Asked his opinion, President Laugerud told a reporter he hadn't had time to read the article, but denounced AI anyway as a "facade" for interests unfriendly to Guatemala. Rhetorically he asked why AI does not protest atrocities in the USSR and Cuba. The weekly La Hora Dominical later pointed out the President's error.

Human rights found a spokesman in Brigadier General Ricardo PERALTA Méndez. Alone among the major Presidential candidates,

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the nominee of the Christian Democrats used the occasion of Bastille Day to inject human rights rhetoric, albeit generalized, into his campaign.

Statistics By the measure of press-reported incidents of probable political violence, July, like June, was relatively calm. Nineteen separate incidents accounted for 14 deaths. It represents the ninth consecutive month of fewer than 30 reported incidents. More than half took place in rural areas. By departments, the incidence breaks down as follows: Guatemala, six; Suchitepéquez, Escuintla, Quezaltenango, Retalhuleu, and San Marcos, two each; Santa Rosa, Chiquimula and El Quiché, one each.

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Enclosure
A-93 from Guatemala

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(INFORMAL TRANSLATION)

From President Laugerud's Annual Report to the Guatemalan Congress, July 1, 1977

Foreign Policy ...

D. Human Rights

The Government of Guatemala respects and guarantees human rights. It is for this reason that it has rejected the false accusations which entities like Amnesty International make against our country.

In response to the policy followed by the U.S. Government of unilaterally judging other nations concerning the observance of human rights, conditioning even military and economic aid to the judgment so formed, the Guatemalan Government has clearly set forth its position. It has defended with dignity the prestige of our country. It has told the U.S. Government that Guatemala views with serious concern and disquiet the possibility of putting into practice the doctrine that a government can unilaterally arrogate to itself the right to judge another government with which it maintains relations of friendship, cooperation, and solidarity, and that on the basis of that unilateral judgment may take measures which in some form may affect the security and economy of the other. Such measures constitute unwarranted interference in internal affairs. This is totally inadmissible among sovereign states. The history of the Inter-American System has consecrated the principle of non-intervention as one of the fundamental duties of states. Any type of improper intervention of one of them in matters of exclusive jurisdiction of another has always been rejected.

The Guatemalan Government shares the just concern for insuring the maximum protection of human rights and fundamental human freedoms in all parts of the world. Inspired by that goal, it has subscribed to various declarations and conventions intended to guarantee those rights and freedoms by means of the international community acting collectively.

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AGR	COM	FRM		FROM			Ambassador GUATEMALA	
INT	LAB	TAN		SUBJECT			DATE: October 6, 1977	
TR	XMR	AIR		REF			Monthly Report on Political Violence and Human Rights: August, 1977	
ARMY	CIA	NAVY		SUMMARY:			After many months of relatively low levels, political violence rose precipitously in August, by the measure of press-reported incidents. Thirty-five such incidents accounted for 41 deaths. Many took place on the South Coast. A substantial number may be related to the breakdown of discipline in the Communist Party, where regional organizations of the PGT/FAR, acting autonomously, began to rival the EGP in terrorist actions. The MLN lost at least eight local activists in these and other attacks. On the human rights side, the Executive took the first step toward ratification of the San José Convention. END SUMMARY	
OSD	USIA	NSA		POL 3			The MLN was one of the big losers during the month. At least eight local MLN leaders of greater or lesser prominence fell victim to terrorist attack.	
				AMB			Relatively quiet in recent months, the EGP took credit for two groups of killings of MLN activists: Comisionado Militar Fabián LOBOS in Chiquimula; and the brothers LOPEZ Romero in Bananera, Izabal. The EGP communiqué charged the men had been organizers and executors of "reactionary terrorism" in their areas. (The EGP may not have been involved in a clash with an army patrol in a remote area near the Honduran border in Chiquimula Department, which left one, a civilian guide, dead.	
				DCM			persuaded the DAO that	
				ECON			the protagonists were simple bandits -- see IR 6 838 0142 77.	
				USIS			The fact that the EGP has not acknowledged the clash would seem to bear this out.	
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The South Coast regional organizations of the PGT, acting autonomously, reportedly were responsible for the deaths of Escuintla MLN leader Adrián VELA Bay, a national deputy from 1970-74; the MLN chief of Tucun Umán, San Marcos Department; and the MLN mayor of Taxisco, Santa Rosa Department. Several of the other South Coast killings (especially numerous in August) may also have been the work of PGT groups not fully under the discipline of the generally cautious Central Committee. The press in some cases reported bodies found with notes recording the settling of scores by the PGT/FAR. Some of these victims may well have been MLN types, but we have no confirmation.

An MLN source told us his party blamed FUN (National Unity Front), coalition partners with the MLN behind the Presidential candidacy of Colonel Enrique PERALTA Azurdia, for the Vela Bay killing (above). This version has the killing growing out of internecine jockeying for places on the MLN ticket for Congress from Escuintla Department. Whatever the truth of the matter, at Vela's funeral Vice President Sandoval, the MLN caudillo, chose to blame the left. He threatened, "Don't make us use violence because blood will flow." Sandoval's reprisal talk earned an equally public rebuke from President Laugerud.

The Archbishop of Guatemala, Cardinal Mario CASARIEGO, delivered a pastoral letter August 15 after an absence of several months. The subject was "The Recrudescence of Violence and the Need for Mature and Free Behavior on the Part of Lay Persons." Faithful to his reputation as one of the most conservative churchmen in Latin America, the Cardinal deplored violence from whatever source, but focused on violence from the left. In the same anti-violence context, he criticized proponents of birth control at length: "That powerful nations impose these conditions and promote such policies in poor countries does not make such policies less criminal or less abusive of elementary human rights."

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Human Rights Atmospheric

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Inter-American Human Rights Convention led to the submission of the Convention to the Council of State for its opinion; preliminary to the Executive's request for Congressional assent; the West German Embassy sponsored a lecture on human rights in Latin America by a German academic, Dr. Josef Thesing; and the newspaper El Gráfico ran much of the Fraser Subcommittee testimony on El Salvador, albeit without comment.

Statistics By the measure of press-reported incidents of probable political violence, August was an active month. Thirty-five separate incidents accounted for 41 deaths, almost twice July's volume in both categories. They represented the highest totals since September, 1976. More than 80 percent of the incidents took place in rural areas, mostly on the South Coast. Two South Coast departments, San Marcos (10) and Suchitepéquez (8), accounted for over half the incidents. By contrast the Department of Guatemala tallied only five, according to this admittedly imprecise measure.

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